



RPL staff learned about being named National Medal finalists at a surprise staff meeting in March.

## Library Earns National Recognition

By Karen Lemke

Rochester Public Library is one of 30 finalists for this year's National Medal for Museum and Library Service.

In a national press conference earlier this spring, Dr. Kathryn K. Matthew, Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) announced the finalists, which are chosen because of their significant and exceptional contributions to their communities.

"Knowing we are included within the top 30, out of thousands of institutions nationwide, is a great honor," says Library Director Audrey Betcher, adding, "In 2012, representatives from throughout Rochester and Olmsted County participated in the library's strategic planning process which led to an increased focus on inclusivity, innovation and creativity."

The 2012 plan called for an increase in opportunities for residents to feel welcome, connected, inspired, and creative, which led to a dramatic rise in program attendance. In that time, attendance at library programs, classes and events increased 304% "We listen to our community," says Betcher, "and the increase in attendance speaks volumes."

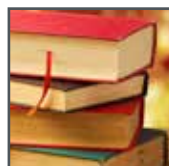
Out of the 30 finalists, 10 will be chosen to receive National Medals at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. In the 23-year history of the National Medal, only two Minnesota libraries have received the honor: St. Paul Public Library (2005) and Hill Museum & Manuscript Library (2011).

IMLS is encouraging community members who visit Rochester Public Library to share their story on the IMLS Facebook page. To Share Your Story and learn more about how these institutions make an impact, please visit [www.facebook.com/USIMLS](http://www.facebook.com/USIMLS).

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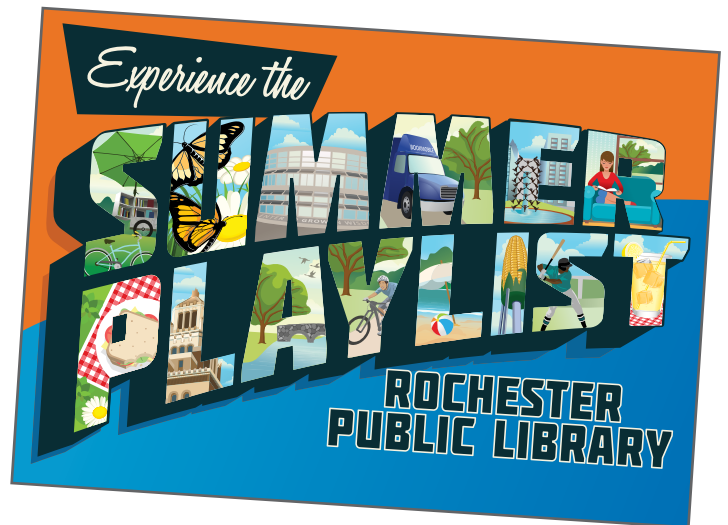
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## Summer Playlist

Experience Rochester this summer with the library's new "Summer Playlist."

This all-ages program will encourage participants not only to read, but to experience new activities and explore the world around them. Head of Youth Services, Heather Acerro, says the "Summer Playlist" is a revamped summer reading program designed for children, teens, and adults. "In the past, our summer program was focused on children and teens. But this year's program is designed for the whole community."

All ages will be encouraged to try new things, explore, connect, create and even design their own goals. Participants will track their progress using the library's "Summer Playlist" log, available early June through August. "There are 'activities' for all ages to try," says Acerro, adding, "For example: four-leaf-clover-hunting for kids, screen-free days for teens, and bird-watching for adults."



As they complete the program, participants will receive gifts such as a free book, canvas book bag and opportunities to win raffle prizes.

The summer-long program will run June 5th through September 2nd. For more information about "Summer Playlist," visit: [www.rochesterpubliclibrary.org/summerplaylist](http://www.rochesterpubliclibrary.org/summerplaylist)

## Tutoring Program Gathers Support

Rochester Reading Champions continues to make a difference in Olmsted County by providing one-on-one tutoring to struggling readers. Earlier this year, the Valley of Rochester Scottish Rite Children's Foundation offered a matching grant opportunity. For every dollar raised in the month of February, they offered to match, up to \$5,000. Community members responded to the challenge by donating \$6,075 to the program.

Other organizations have also been extremely supportive this past year. In late 2016, the library was presented with a \$7,000 check from the Rochester Area Foundation to support the program. The donation will be used to train volunteers and provide tutoring to older students.

The program has also received support to help younger students. A \$15,600 grant awarded in mid-2016 from United Way of Olmsted County is helping provide additional tutoring for children and youth.

Program Coordinator Gail Harris says the local support demonstrates how the community values literacy. "We see the impact RRC makes on the individuals who struggled with



Library Director Audrey Betcher (left) accepts a check from the Rochester Area Foundation. Pictured: Betcher, RAF Grants Administrator Jane Angelone, Reading Champions tutor Jane Mervosh, and RAF Board Member & Grant Distribution Committee Chair, Don Supalla

reading prior to beginning the program," she says, adding, "and we know none of it would be possible without our supporters."

An impressive 100% of RRC students have made progress in their reading skills by participating in the program.

## A Message from Library Board President Amy Ward

Earlier this year, President Trump's proposed budget recommended eliminating federal library funding by wiping out the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

The proposed cuts would be devastating to all libraries, including ours. Public funding for libraries is not historically a partisan issue and voices of support from all ends of the political spectrum have sustained libraries for more than a century. Rochester legislators are historically supportive of cultural funding, but they still need to hear from local constituents to affirm these legislators as they fight for continued cultural and library funding.

Share your support for libraries by contacting your legislators or by joining the social media conversation by using #saveIMLS.

Together we can show our support for IMLS and libraries nationwide!

Contact information:

Congressman Tim Walz: (507) 388-2149

Senator Amy Klobuchar: (507) 288-5321

Senator Al Franken: (651) 221-1016

Contact by email by visiting: <http://bit.ly/ContactMNreps>

## Hotspot & Chromebooks

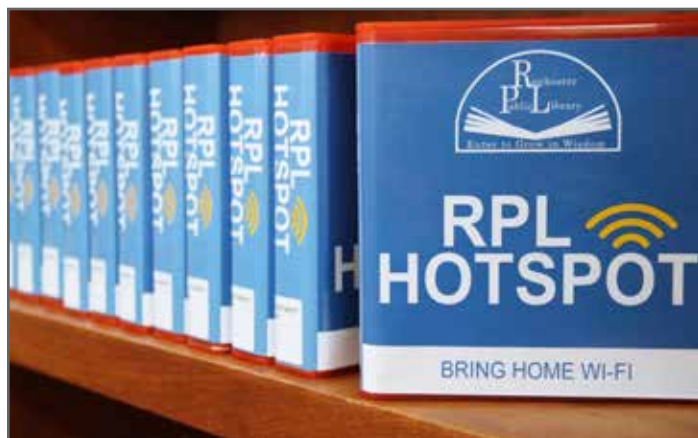
Being connected to the digital world is a bit easier for RPL patrons with the recently-launched Wi-Fi Hotspot program.

The new initiative, sponsored by the RPL Foundation, provides hotspots for checkout to library patrons, allowing them access to mobile broadband. In Olmsted County, only 58% of residents have access to broadband, which can make applying for jobs or doing homework a difficult task.

In the program's first few months, the response has been extremely positive. Circulation Services Manager Andy Stehr says he knew the program would be popular, but he's still a bit surprised at the demand for the devices.

Within the first few weeks of offering the service, the demand outpaced the supply. At one point, the list of holds on the 30 "regular" hotspots (those that check out, for free, with a library card) had 35 people waiting for them.

Meanwhile, the rental-type hotspot program is also picking up speed. "This is for individuals who need broadband access



on specific days, and therefore rent the device," says Stehr. The rental hotspot is \$5 per day and can be borrowed for a total of 90 days at a time. Stehr also says the rental service gained more popularity during Spring Break, "and we expect the same for summer break," he adds.

Using an online booking calendar, patrons can easily choose their rental period to reserve the hotspots. To check the availability of the rental hotspots, visit: <http://bit.ly/rplRental>

## Survey Says...

Over 900 people participated in our Library Customer Survey this year, providing valuable insight into how the library promotes services and programs.

Regular library users said they value the library for themselves and the community as a whole, with 96% of library users saying they feel RPL is "valuable" or "very valuable" in their own lives, while even more (97%) feel RPL is "valuable" or "very valuable" to the community.

Additional information from the survey will be used for marketing and promotional purposes, including an effort to promote the library's upcoming "Summer Playlist" program.



*Congratulations to Adin G., winner of the 2017 Customer Survey drawing! Adin is one of 925 people to participated in the survey and earned a \$100 Amazon gift card.*

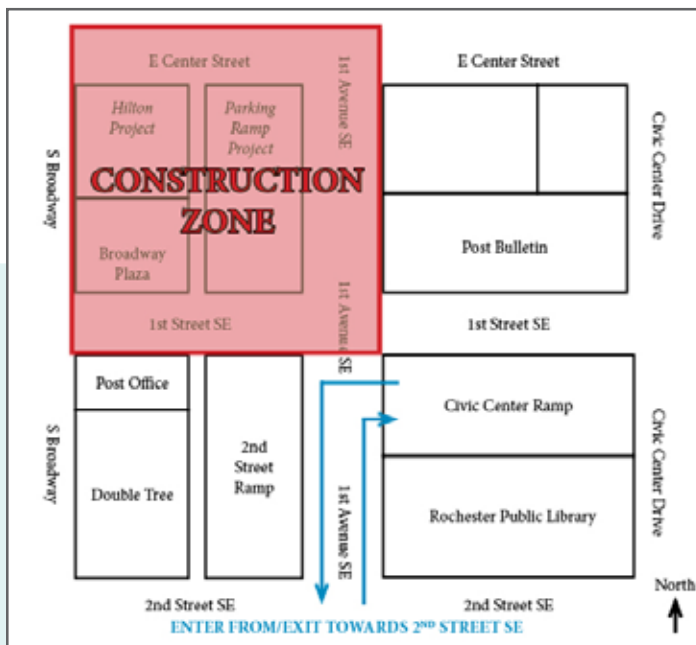
# Getting to the Library

Construction projects in downtown Rochester will affect Rochester Public Library users over the next several months.

Work along 1st Avenue NE and SE between 1st Street NE and 1st Street SE will impact getting to the library and using the connected Civic Center Ramp. The projects started in April and will run through much of the summer. Patrons wishing to park in the Civic Center Ramp will have to enter from and exit towards 2nd Street SE as shown in the diagram. Updates on the city projects, including staging maps, can be found at <http://bit.ly/RPLandVisits>

The construction work near the library could create delays during heavy-traffic hours. A few great work-arounds to remember:

- Free parking is available after 4:01 p.m. and on weekends, which tend to have less traffic
- The library bookmobile is available for pickups, holds, and drop-offs. It's also easy to find the bookmobile on our regularly-updated schedule: <http://bit.ly/RPLbkmb>
- The BookBike & ArtCart are heading to local parks and events, starting May 15th. Checkouts available at the BookBike, but books can be returned to the library or the Bookmobile. A full BookBike schedule can be found: <http://bit.ly/RPLbookbike>
- Digital ebooks, audiobooks and videos are available 24/7 through Overdrive: <https://rochester.overdrive.com>



# Bookworm Walk



The Rochester Downtown Alliance (RDA) and Rochester Public Library are teaming up this summer for "The Bookworm Walk."

This short, child-friendly activity combines a story and a short walk. The story pages will be placed in planters near the library, leading children and their caregivers on a literary stroll.

According to RDA Program Manager, Karly McElroy, "The goal for the Bookworm Walk is to provide families with an activity that not only stretches their minds and their legs, but allows them to engage with reading as a family in a unique and creative way. Downtown Rochester is a wonderful place to explore and enjoy, and we are excited to partner with the Rochester Public Library on the Bookworm Walk program."

The program will kick off in June. For more information, visit: <http://www.downtownrochestermn.com/events/calendar>

# Edible Book Festival

Twenty-five Rochester-area residents played with their food in April as part of the 5th Annual Edible Book Festival. Entries were created from mostly edible elements including cake, frosting, fruits and vegetables, and an array of candies. This year, three special guest judges helped choose category winners: Jess Abrahamson (KTTC Television), Mariah Mihm (Rochester Civic Theatre) and Kaitlin Anderson (Hy-Vee Stores). Hy-Vee also donated a cake (for eating, but would have made a great entry!).

For more photos from the event, visit the library's Facebook page (@RochPubLibrary).



## New Library Friends Board

### Front row from left to right:

Kim Keilholtz, Bessie Copple, Ann Griese, Karen Nath, Ann Jones, Joyce Wentz, Diane Edwards, Pat Stephenson, Unni Gopinathan

### Back row from left to right:

Pat Mann, Gen Theobald, Phillip Nordquist, John Hunziker, Madison Wurth

**Missing from photo:** Louis Wagner, Phyllis Hambricht, Lathika Nair

**Welcome new Board members:** Kim, Ann, Unni, Gen, John, Madison and Louis!



## Rochesterfest Booksale

Hardcovers: \$2<sup>+</sup>tax

Trade size paperback: \$1.50<sup>+</sup>tax

Mass paperbacks: \$1<sup>+</sup>tax

Childrens & non-print: 50¢<sup>+</sup>tax

Last Day: Fill up a grocery bag provided by Friends for \$8<sup>(includes tax)</sup>



**Monday, June 19 | 5-7PM** (Friends-only Preview Sale)

**Tuesday, June 20 | 9:30AM-7PM**

**Wednesday, June 21 | 9:30AM-7PM**

**Thursday, June 22 | 9:30AM-6PM**

*Don't let construction deter you from this AMAZING Book Sale!*

*While the ramp at the Library may be difficult to access, there are two city parking ramps on 2nd Street that will be open during the Book Sale.*

## Bookstore Donation

Friends of the Library Bookstore Managers Pat Stephenson and Bessie Copple present a \$60,000 check to Library Board Chair, Amy Ward in January. The donation is the largest ever presented by the Bookstore.



## The Friends of the Library send books overseas to service members through a program called Operation Paperback

Greetings from the desert country of Qatar! We are four months into a twelve-month deployment. We are a PATRIOT unit and our mission is to defend American and Coalition lives and assets from the threat of possible aerial attack. We spend our days in 24-hour shifts, rotating through three crews. Our sites are fully manned and ready to engage enemy threats within a moment's notice with surface-to-air missiles. When not at war, however, life at site can become somewhat...boring. That's why I reached out to organizations such as yours to provide my Soldiers with productive ways to entertain themselves and occupy their minds while on shift. There's nothing quite like getting absorbed in a good book, whether it be a novel, biography, historical account, or self-help guide. Many of my Soldiers did not consider themselves readers before I started to receive books from generous

donors such as yourself and built a display of interesting books in plain sight where they could see them and pick whichever book caught their interest. At first the Soldiers were puzzled. "Sir, where are you getting these books from?" they would ask. I told them that nice people who cared about us donated these books so that we would have something productive and entertaining to do instead of sitting around playing on our phones.

It didn't take long to catch on. Every time I brought in a new package or books Soldiers would gather around curiously to see what kinds of books were inside. Nearly every day I'd notice a Soldier with a new book in his hand that I had unpacked from a box I'd received recently. Before long, our unit became known for our "library," and even Commanders from other units

would come by and ask if they could pick up a book or two!

None of this would have been possible without people like you. I'm stunned and beyond touched that a total stranger would take the time out of his or her day to acquire, package and mail books using their own money so that people they've never met before could have something in their hands while on this long and lonely deployment and get away in their minds. People like me are told "thank you for your service" quite often, especially when we're in uniform. My response is always the same, and it is always sincere:

Thank you for your support.

Warm regards,

*Peter Y. Lee*

*First Lieutenant, US Army*

# Rochester Public Library Foundation 2016 Annual Report

## Rochester Public Library Foundation Statement of Financial Position

Current Assets	2016	2015
Bank Accounts		
US Bank Brokerage Account	-	10,004
US Bank Checking	47,335	54,130
Total Current Assets	47,335	65,134

Fixed Assets	2016	2015
Furniture & Equipment	1,898	1,898
Leasehold Improvements	11,275	11,275
Total Fixed Assets	13,173	13,173
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	2,462	1,898
Total Fixed Assets	10,711	11,275

Other Assets	2016	2015
Investment Portfolio	2,377,330	2,248,608
Accrued Interest	9,434	3,464
Total Other Assets	2,386,765	2,252,073

Total Assets	\$2,444,811	2,327,482
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Equity	2016	2015
Perm. Restricted Net Assets	2,191,399	2,191,399
Unrestricted Net Assets	136,519	229,936
Net Revenue	116,893	(93,853)
Total Equity	\$2,444,811	2,327,482

## Letter from the Library Foundation Board President & Executive Director

The Library Foundation is thrilled to watch our Library be one of 30 finalists for this year's National Medal for Museum and Library Service. Our library is rated in the top 30, out of thousands of institutions nationwide. This is national recognition for the outstanding staff and programs such as the Rochester Reading Champions and the Hotspot Program. These two programs serve our youth and citizens with literacy programming and the ability to have internet connectivity which enables learning and workforce development. The Foundation Board agreed to be a major funder for the RPL Hotspot program to enable people to apply for jobs, do homework, and connect with family and world-wide opportunities. The Foundation is proud to be part of the funding streams to support these programs and many others during 2016 and 2017. With your help, the Foundation will continue to raise funds for educational and informational resources and projects in a manner that does not diminish the need for strong public funding. We will also work alongside you, our supporters, to educate the community and policy makers about the Library's role in meeting community needs, as the Library strengthens their vision to be a place where aspirations, ideas and knowledge converge.

### *Martha McClees*

Foundation Board, President  
Corporate & Foundation Relations  
Department of Development  
Mayo Clinic

### *Vicki Allen*

Executive Director,  
Rochester Public  
Library Foundation  
vallen@rochester.lib.mn.us

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## LIBRARY HOURS

**Monday - Thursday**  
9:30AM - 9:00PM

**Friday**  
9:30AM - 5:30PM

**Saturday** (school year)  
9:30 - 5:30PM

**Sunday** (school year)  
1:30PM - 5:30PM

**Saturday** (summer)  
9:30AM - 1:30PM

**Sunday** (summer)  
CLOSED

**Summer hours start the day after  
Memorial Day: Tues., May 30th.**

507.328.2300  
[www.rochesterpubliclibrary.org](http://www.rochesterpubliclibrary.org)

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Library Director

**Karen Lemke**  
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**Nicole Henry**  
Layout/Design



## Why I Support the Rochester Public Library

Except for public education and the local governing body, I think a public library is the most important democratic function of a community. It is the most leveling social, educational, recreational and economic institution. It was for me since I was able to walk.

I have always thought a public library is a key to giving people, native and immigrants, the skills to become productive in society. This is important now as Rochester grows and needs many additional workers. There simply aren't enough local people to provide Mayo Clinic or other employers with sufficient staff to become the Destination Medical Center. And RPL has dramatically stepped up to providing those extra skills.

Our library has become the cultural crossroads of Rochester, one of the few places assertively welcoming everyone without cost. And a library is the most wondrous and exciting place for anyone to learn about the world,

to be well read and receive a boost to a productive life. In my 40 years as a heavy user, the staff has always been dedicated, welcoming and helpful.

*Frank Yossi*

*Honorary Board Member,  
Rochester Public Library Foundation*

Hi. I just want to once again send a shout out to my wonderful library! First, I wanted to read a book. Next I learned you didn't have it in your collection. Then I learned I could actually ask you to PURCHASE it.

And finally, you DID! So this humble tax payer and frequent, grateful library user, put in a request for a book and now it's in the collection and I'm on the list to check it out.

What a country!!

*Adrienne*  
in Rochester :-)

Editor's note: All RPL patrons have the ability to suggest items for purchase. Visit <http://bit.ly/RPLrecommend> for more information.

Find us on social media:

